

Sustainable Prosperity - Addressing Amsterdam's international footprint

Call for Seed Grants 2022-2023

The Strategic Plan (IP) topic Sustainable Prosperity Research projects will work on challenges that follow from the planetary boundaries that we have reached (including climate change, biodiversity, clean water and novel entities/chemical pollution), and on approaches that can help steer human development towards a safe and just operating space (including new sustainable products and zero waste and toxic-free practices).

Our distinctive approach is that research needs to be pursued at multiple levels (global, regional, national or local level) and that they need to address multiple dimensions of such “translation”, including biophysical dimensions (technological, geographical and ecological), socio-economic, cultural and legal-ethical dimensions while reckoning with the concrete actors that are involved and their behaviours.

Within the above approach, in 2022-2023 the Theme will focus on the city/region of Amsterdam in relation to sustainable prosperity under the heading *Addressing Amsterdam's international footprint*.

The choice of the theme is induced by the fact that according to a [recent report](#), the Netherlands ranks lowest of the EU member states on negative international environmental spillovers. Amsterdam provides a significant contribution. For instance, many extractive industries are based in the greater Amsterdam region, either with plants or with headquarters. Pension funds that (do or do not) invest in energy-intensive sectors are also based here. They impact environments and societies globally. Other examples are raw materials (via the port of Amsterdam), materials used by ACTA and Amsterdam UMC, for buildings and construction, in clothing, and energy usage more broadly.

With the theme *Addressing Amsterdam's international footprint*, proposals are invited for bringing together and developing knowledge that is needed to better understand how this footprint comes about, and where possible explore how particular interventions can contribute to reducing the footprint. Projects may include a mapping of the impact of particular Amsterdam-based activities, and the various institutions/organisations/companies involved, with significant extra-territorial global impact, and their impacts on e.g. biodiversity, climate change, water quality, air pollution. Reduction of these impacts or increased awareness pointing at avenues for change can be measure of success.

Project may also seek to identify and understand the transformative potential of alternatives, e.g. involving different types of actors/companies, different products or production processes, new/different business models, new (mixes of) regulatory approaches etc., with particular attention for those cases where there can be positive spill effects, or provide inspiration for other municipalities, etc., in the Netherlands and abroad (from local to global).

To realize such insights, proposals are invited that combine and integrate disciplinary knowledge and methodologies. Technological innovation (e.g. the design of new biodegradable/reusable materials, methods for carbon capture and carbon-neutral food production) can only have impact if accepted by society, and properly implemented by a range of actors. Similarly, social and/or business innovations must be designed and adopted, and require effective legal and economic measures to accelerate the transition. Approaches may require new analytical (and perhaps simulation) models of intertwined biophysical/technological, socio-economic and ethical/legal dimensions in order to devise effective policies and interventions.

For 2022-2023 projects should relate to one of the following themes:

- **Textiles:** The textile sector is resource- and waste-intensive and highly polluting. How can we build a more circular and fair textiles value chain? How do local actions (purchase decisions, washing behavior etc) contribute to the global textiles footprint of the city/region? What technological, societal or regulatory innovations could help making textiles more sustainable?
- **Raw materials:** A large variety of raw materials is being used in and transported to and via the Amsterdam region. How can the city/region and actors within it act to change the sustainability impact of such global supply/value chains here and/or elsewhere for the better?
- **Construction/housing:** While Amsterdam is struggling with a housing crisis, the construction sector is one of the main resource users and polluters globally. What technological, social or regulatory innovations can help solve Amsterdam's housing crisis *sustainably*?
- **Health:** The health sector broadly defined is very substantive in the Amsterdam region, including within our own university, and has a large ecological footprint. How can we assess such impacts and find ways to reduce it through behavioural, organizational and/or technological measures?
- **Investments:** Pension funds, banks and other investors based in Amsterdam have significant investments in the fossil fuel and other environmentally unsustainable sectors. Projects can explore how the importance of such investments can best be assessed (given their complex nature), what are challenges in changing/phasing out such investments, and what may be possible solutions.

Call for proposals – criteria for application

Seed grants are intended to explore and stimulate interfaculty collaboration and can have a maximum of 50k€ each. Depending on the number of applications and the requested budgets, we expect to be able to award between 3-4 grants.

Deadline: May 1st 2022

Applications can be sent to P.A.Nollkaemper@uva.nl

Application criteria:

- The proposal needs to fall within the scope of the *Addressing Amsterdam's international footprint* and specify how that is the case.
- At least 3 faculties should be involved in a proposal
- Any staff member of the UvA can apply, including PhDs and postdocs. At least one member with tenure (including staff members who currently are on a tenure track) should be involved. Members of the steering committee can participate in applications but will not take part in assessment of such proposals.
- The proposal needs to explicate how this adds to the overall knowledge base of UvA and does not copy what is being done at other institutions in the Amsterdam region.
- The proposal should involve new research initiatives, although they may build on existing projects; they should however clearly extend the collaborative and/or interdisciplinary and/or methodological scope.
- The envisaged output of the project should be clearly described (e.g., a joint paper, an interdisciplinary research proposal or joint grant proposal).
- The proposal needs to describe what the grant will be spent on, with rough estimates of the amounts and a timeline of the project with a starting and end date. The project should be completed by 31st of December 2022 or by 1 June 2023.

Eligible expenses:

- Personnel costs.
- Data access and collection, research assistants (RA rate standardized: 55 per hour gross, including UvA overhead).
- Conferences/research travel/visitor proposals.

Selection:

- Between 3-4 proposals will be selected by the Steering Group Sustainable Prosperity.
- Selection will take place between 1st and 31st of May 2022.
- Selection will, apart from the formal criteria indicated above and alignment with the theme *Addressing Amsterdam's international footprint*, also be based on the potential for transformative effect and the potential to involve external partners, with a view to potential continuation in the later stages of the IP process.

Accountability:

The selected initiatives are asked to provide a short report to the Steering Group Sustainable Prosperity before the end of the calendar year, which provides insight into the use of funds and the progress made.

Application Form for seed grants for Sustainable Prosperity

The proposal can be written in Dutch or English. Please submit by 1st of May 2022

1. Title

2. Summary (max. 100 words)

3. Relation with the IP topic and Scientific Case (max. 1000 words)

The proposal should involve new research initiatives but these can be extensions of existing projects.

Please specify:

- the relation to the topic of the Theme
- the research question(s) and goals of the project
- the methodological approach(es)
- the scholarly/scientific contribution/innovation

4. Organization and institutional context

At least 3 faculties should be involved in a proposal, and any staff member of the UvA can apply, including PhDs and postdocs. At least one member with tenure should be involved.

Please specify:

- How does the proposed initiative relate to existing research groups, how will it be organized?
- Who are the members of this project?
- Are there collaborations with partners outside the UvA?

5. Expected output and success indicators

The envisaged output of the project should be clearly described (e.g., a joint paper, an interdisciplinary research proposal or joint grant proposal).

Please specify:

- What products or other deliverables are expected?
- What would indicate the success of this initiative?

6. Budget

The seed grants are intended to explore and stimulate interfaculty collaboration and have a maximum of 30-50k€ each.

Please specify:

- What will the grant be spent on? Please provide rough estimates of the amounts and a timeline of the project, with a starting and end date.